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Dialogue

The Staff Newsletter of the

Ministry of Community and Social Services

Going to the top for United Way

The CN Tower Stair Climb — in which volunteers climb the 1,760 steps to the top of the CN Tower in Toronto in exchange for pledges to the United Way — has become a wildly-popular fundraising event. This year's climbs, which took place Oct. 28 and 29, had hundreds of participants, many waiting in line for as long as two hours to make the climb. MCSS had about 40 climbers,

including teams of colleagues taking part in the Team Challenge. A contingent from Legal Services Branch did the climb and received t-shirts and certificates for their efforts. Among them were: Karina Saccà, Alana Page of Hamilton (daughter of Children's Services

staffer Eva Page, and a law-school friend of Karina's), Dean Samaras, Scott Ceriko and Cindy Crandall.



In: Kitchener photo



Brenda Pichell photo

Gloria Joshua, the chaplain at Southwestern Regional Centre (right) shares a convivial moment with Hazel Thomas, a resident. October 23 - 27 was Spiritual and Religious Care Awareness Week in Canada; the theme this year was A Celebration of Relationships.

Focussing on employment



In the resource centre, Lillian Cosgrove and Joan Annis look over some of the constantly-updated materials available to social assistance clients in the Birchmount Road Family Benefits office.

Most people who depend on social assistance would rather be working for a living. Our income maintenance staff know this — that's why more and more of the focus in our local offices is on helping recipients prepare for and find employment.

In Metro Toronto, the eight Family Benefits offices are now linked to Human Resources Development Canada (Canada Employment Centres) with job bank kiosks. These free-standing computer screens are located in the public areas of our local offices and enable our clients to look up the latest information on available jobs, news bulletins and Government of Canada information on topics such as the Canada Pension Plan and old age security benefits, unemployment insurance and veterans' programs.

"It's one-stop shopping with the most up-to-date information available," says **Lillian Cosgrove**, one of the income maintenance supervisors at the 770 Birchmount Road office in Scarborough. "And it's just part of our ability to help clients plan for employment."

The Birchmount office has two of the kiosks: one in the waiting room which anyone walking off the street can use, and another in its resource centre. This room has been set up especially for clients and is part of the office's overall plan to help clients explore educational and employment opportunities, says **Joan Annis**, Birchmount's employment specialist.

Besides a word processor, typewriter and telephone (and soon, a fax) that can be used by clients, the resource

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Spiritual care is in capable hands

Oct. 23 - 27 was Spiritual and Religious Care Awareness Week in Canada. When people in provincially-operated facilities need or want spiritual and religious care, that task is handled by Chaplaincy Services Ontario.

MCSS is the lead ministry in co-ordinating the services of chaplains who look after the spiritual needs of people living in facilities for those with developmental handicaps, children's residences, hospitals, homes for the aged and correctional facilities, to name just a few.

Chaplaincy Services Ontario works with the Ontario MultiFaith Council on Spiritual and Religious Care (OMCSRC) to provide and deliver spiritual care throughout the province.

MCSS co-ordinates spiritual care on a regional basis. For example, **Rev. Rene Hebert** co-ordinates activities in the north-east out of the ministry's Sudbury District Office, while **Rev. John de Vries** operates from Child and Parent Resource Institute (CPRI) in London.

The other chaplains are: **Rev. David J. Clark**, who serves a central area from Green Acres Home for the Aged

in Newmarket; **Rev. Stuart Schroeder**, who works from Freeport Hospital in Kitchener to serve a mid-west region; **Luisa Strasser** in the Thunder Bay Area Office; **Rev. Adam Prasuhn** works out of Kingston; and in a south-central location, **Rev. Lynda Kelly** is located in the Provincial Office in Toronto.

About 200 frontline chaplains are supported by Chaplaincy Services Ontario. **Rev. Gloria Joshua**, for example, is a co-ordinating chaplain who administers to the spiritual needs of residents at Southwestern Regional Centre.

Overseeing Chaplaincy Services Ontario is **Rev. Michael Steeves**, the provincial co-ordinator, located at 35 McCaul St. in Toronto. The provincial co-ordination team and facility chaplains are in turn supported by the faith groups of the province through the OMCSRC, which has 29 member faith groups. The faith groups provide more than 7,000 volunteers who work with the chaplains in the provision of service.

For another photo and a related story, see page 2.

Streamlining our operations

As part of the ministry's efforts to reduce operating expenditures and to streamline our operations, the Strategic Directions Division has been eliminated and a number of positions declared redundant.

Our deputy minister, **Sandra Lang**, announced on Oct. 16 that some of the functions of the division will be performed by the new Corporate Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs (CPIA) Branch, which has become

part of the Corporate Services Division. The branch has 16 positions.

Functions which were performed by the Estimates Planning Secretariat are now shared by the new CPIA Branch and the financial analysis unit of Financial and Capital Planning Branch. Co-ordination of aboriginal services has become part of Children, Family and Community Services Division.

Corporate Services Division also

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Sometimes, one word says it all

Sometimes we use several words — called "prepositional phrases" — when a single word will do the job. Try these in your writing:

Instead of this: Use this:
in accordance with by, under
in addition to besides
inasmuch as since
in association with with
in case of if
in connection with with, about,
 concerning

PLAIN LANGUAGE PLEASE

Instead of this: Use this:
in excess of more than, over
in favour of for
in order to to
in relation to about,
 concerning
insofar as since
 without

A guide to others' faith traditions

Whether your work requires you to be familiar with the customs of other faiths, or you're just interested in knowing more about them, the *Multifaith Information Manual* is a valuable resource.

The manual is a comprehensive and authoritative reference guide about the practices and requirements of 34 denominations and religious traditions.

Published by the Ontario Multifaith Council, a volunteer body representing 29 faith groups in Ontario, it began as a brief guide to help chaplains respond to the spiritual and religious care needs of Ontario citizens in institutions. The council provides support for the work of chaplains in institutions and works with faith groups and the Government of Ontario to ensure the spiritual care of those in the care of the ministries of

Health, Solicitor General and Correctional Services, and Community and Social Services. It's aimed at providing sensitive care in an increasingly diverse society.

Each chapter includes sections on the nature of the faith group, basic beliefs, rituals, beliefs and practices regarding death, holy days and festivals, dietary requirements and symbols.

The 230-page, soft-cover book is \$23.95 and can be obtained from the Ontario Multifaith Council Publishing Trust, 35 McCaul St., Suite 200, Toronto ON M5T 1V7 (tel.: 416-326-6858; fax 416-326-6867). This is the same address as Chaplaincy Services Ontario and of the Ontario Multifaith Council on Spiritual and Religious Care (OMCSR).



...Focussing on employment

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centre has print and video materials on preparing for and finding employment, assessing your skills, and information on schooling, local training programs and job placements. "The job bank kiosks are just the newest tool in our roster of services," says Joan, who has more than two decades of experience in the field of adult learning and employment preparation. There are also workshops that help clients get ready for school or into programs, another for the job-ready, and a new workshop Joan co-leads with income maintenance officers.

The IMOs — and there are about 25 of them at Birchmount who serve about 8,000 clients — also take a binder full of training and education

information specific to Scarborough with them when visiting clients, and meet monthly to be updated on community resources.

Elsewhere in Toronto, the ministry is participating with the federal and municipal governments in two pilot projects to co-ordinate these kinds of services to people on social assistance. **Kerry Ann Markle**, of the Employment Programs Branch at Toronto Area Office, says one is being set up at our 121 Kennedy Road office and will link caseworkers with technology; the other, the Rexdale Employment Resource Centre at 1620 Albion Road, is now open and offers self-help resources as well as in-depth employment counselling.



Chaplains Gloria Joshua and Mike Doupé lead a sing-a-long for seniors at Southwestern Regional Centre. In a ministry that serves a diverse group of people, the *Multifaith Information Manual* is a valuable resource.

Community partnerships celebrated on United Nations Day

by Jack Stiff, MCSS Communications and Marketing Branch

A unique community fair celebrating the partnership between government, business, labour and the community took place in North York on Oct. 24 — United Nations Day. Among the event's purposes was to identify and address the needs of

people facing barriers to employment.

United Nations Day was chosen because the UN represents the gathering of many nations to work cooperatively, progressing so that each may attain its fullest potential. The goal of the Community Partnerships Fair '95 was to help those facing employment barriers reach their fullest potential through the collaborative efforts of business, agencies, community groups and government.

Community Partnerships Fair '95 was the first such co-operative venture between MCSS's Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS) and Motorola Canada Limited. The idea was initiated by our Toronto area VRS job placement officers and the

workplace diversity unit at Motorola.

Motorola, host of the event, is an international electronic communications firm, a private-sector company with a respected and progressive reputation in training, hiring and working with people who may face barriers to employment. The people primarily are those with disabilities, but can include minority groups and cultures, aboriginal people and new Canadians.

The fair, held on Motorola's premises, brought together senior executives, managers, human resources professionals of various businesses, community groups and agencies, and representatives of municipal, provincial and federal government agencies.

"The Community Fair was a very successful event where diversity in the workplace was discussed, and employment opportunities were promoted for people with disabilities, as well as others who face barriers to employment," says **Brenda-Jean Lycett**, Motorola's manager of workplace diversity. "The fair also provided an excellent venue for networking," she notes.

Among the tools which have been developed to assist people with

disabilities to find employment, as well as for employers seeking job-ready candidates, is the Wide Area Employment Network (WAEN). Developed by the Canadian Council on Rehabilitation and Work, WAEN is an innovative computer network containing resumes of skilled people with disabilities for viewing by employers.

Through a user-friendly multi-media system, individuals compose their resume using special assistive devices as needed. The resume is stored in the network's central file system. Employers can search and retrieve the resumes of candidates with appropriate skills through their own computers.

"It is through programs and events such as this fair, and through partnerships and working together, that a workplace that's truly representative of our community will be achieved," says **Kathy Drummond**, supervisor of VRS for MCSS.



VRS staff Ilisa Abraham and Kathryn Drummond at the Community Partnerships Fair '95.

Editors note: The Adoption Resource Exchange is held twice a year at Queen's Park and is a professional development event for children's aid society adoption workers in the province.

Bringing the adoptive family together

When an adoptive family and their adopted child have trouble bonding together, it might not be therapy that's needed; maybe what they really need is information.



Nancy Cohen and Jim Duvall

Adoptions workers from around the province who attended the ministry-hosted Adoption Resource Exchange Oct. 15-19 learned about the Family Attachment Program at an educational workshop given by representatives from the C.M. Hincks Centre for Children's Mental Health in Toronto. This program is intended for families adopting older children and combines interventions that encourage attachment with "brief therapy" techniques.

There's a difference between bonding and attachment, said **Nancy Cohen**, the centre's director of research. Bonding is a kind of "falling in love" that's probably hormonal in nature and often seen in parents of newborns, or when adoptive parents first meet their child; attachment happens over time and is a result of interaction and the ties of growing affection. A child's ability to attach to others is important because it will affect the child's ability to relate to others — including the ability to parent as an adult.

Jim Duvall, Hincks' director of Brief Therapy Training Centres

Stories and photos by Julia Naczynski

International, described how "brief therapy" sessions under the guidance of an "interviewer" can help promote growth in the adoptive family in about 10 sessions. Strictly speaking, it's not therapy so much as it's an exchange of information in which the parents learn about the child's life prior to adoption, and the adopted child learns about the family rules and rituals; everyone tells their life stories and personal histories. There is a "mapping out" of life events and as the discussion moves toward the family's future life together, they work out their expectations of each other and talk about roles and relationships within the family.

Bonding is a kind of "falling in love" .. attachment happens over time as a result of growing affection.

The final session usually includes a "resolution party" or "adoption wedding" in which the family members celebrate their commitment as a family.

Nancy noted that these techniques are used only when the adopted child is old enough to participate and usually begins a few months after the adoption placement if it's needed. Both Nancy and Jim believe that a post-placement program of this kind should be a regular feature of the process of adopting older children. When a child is adopted as an infant or toddler, it might be useful when the child is about eight or nine years old, or reaches adolescence.

Paving the way to open adoption

"**O**pen adoption," in which adopted children can have on-going contact with members of their birth family, is currently not possible under Ontario law or anywhere in Canada, for that matter.

But a sub-committee of the Canadian Bar Association of Ontario has proposed amendments to the legislation that governs adoption.

Marvin Bernstein, who is chief counsel for the Catholic Children's Aid Society of Metro Toronto, told adoption workers attending the fall Adoption Resource Exchange that "there needs to be a balance of competing rights" in the law that will allow open adoption (sometimes it's called "adoption with access"). Open adoption would, for example, give natural grandparents a legal right to have contact with grandchildren who have been adopted outside the birth family, or permit siblings to stay in touch with each other after an adoption.

In the past two years there have been at least five judicial decisions that do not fit the established principles for determining the question of access after adoption, Marvin said. An absence of clear legislative rules has caused judges to make rulings based on their own

Part of the solution could be distinguishing "contact" from "access."

discretion and their own identification of "special circumstances." This is too subjective a standard and gives judges too much power, he said.

Canadian child protection law generally is based on the principle of "the best interests of the child." Provisions in the Child and Family Services Act, the Children's Law Reform Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms also come into play.

Part of the solution for open adoption could be distinguishing "contact" from "access." Marvin said that an exchange of letters, photos and videos can maintain an adopted child's relationship with a birth



Marvin Bernstein

relative without face-to-face meetings.

Up until recently, courts have been remarkably pro-adoption in the traditional sense, noted the lawyer; the appeal courts in particular have respected absolutely such principles as the finality and privacy of adoption.

The Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS) is another organization that is seeking solutions to the dilemma through the proposal of a revised legislative framework.

Celebrate National Child Day



Nov. 20 marks National Child Day in Canada.

Nov. 20 was chosen because it is the anniversary of two historic

United Nations events — the adoption of the Declaration of the Rights of the Child in 1959, and the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989. The Convention was ratified by Canada in 1991.

The Convention details numerous children's rights, from the right to

proper nutrition, education and health care to protection from exploitation and abuse.

Since 1995 is also the United Nations International Year for Tolerance, people are encouraged to show children on National Child Day that people are unique and naturally different from one another, and that every child should have the same opportunity to learn and grow to their full potential.

National Child Day is being promoted by the Children's Bureau of the federal department Health Canada.

...Streamlining operations

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assumes responsibility for any remaining Broader Public Sector labour relations and pay equity requirements.

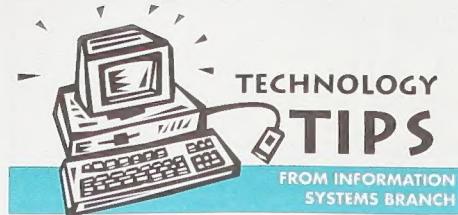
As a result of these changes, 80 positions are being eliminated.

In other cost-saving measures to streamline operations, 64.1 full-time equivalent positions, representing 66 employees from across the province, were declared redundant at the beginning of October. Notice was also given of plans to terminate 96 temporary staff on contract, an additional 88 vacant positions were abolished and 11 full-time positions

were converted to regular part time (6.5 full-time equivalent).

The ministry Library and Career Resources (LCR) will be closed by March 1996 and staff have begun to wind down activities at 880 Bay St. in Toronto. If you have borrowed materials from LCR, they should be returned by December 31.

The resources of the Career Centre are now the responsibility of our redeployment/training unit in Human Resources. For information, contact **Audrey Gough-Boswell** at 416-327-4821, or your redeployment advisor.



Ministry policies and the Internet

Information Systems Branch (ISB) has drafted a set of Internet policies, which have received input from within ISB, ministry systems managers and the Policy Directors Working Group. These policies are presently going through the ministry sign-off process, which should be completed shortly. They will be released to all organizational units and will be available on DEC in EMMA.

The policies include a broad policy direction, which outlines roles for the Corporate Information Technology Service (CITS) at Management Board Secretariat, ISB, line management, policy development and program

delivery areas and Communications and Marketing Branch (CMB), objectives, the requirements to meet the objectives and accountability.

The policies cover topics including access and management, security and World Wide Web (WWW) servers and home pages, gopher servers and Wide Area Information Server (WAIS).

The policies include the actual policy statement and responsibilities for users, line management, ISB and CMB.

For more information, please contact Gary McCombs at ISB, 416-730-6569 or e-mail MCCOMBS_G.

Quality of Life conference in June

Surrey Place Centre, a private, not-for-profit multi-disciplinary agency that serves people with developmental disabilities, is marking its 30th anniversary with a conference. *Quality of Life: An International Conference for Families and Professionals on Developmental and Related Disabilities* will be held June 6 - 8, 1996. It will be held at the Delta Chelsea Inn in Toronto. Early

registration should be made by Mar. 15, 1996. For more information and a preliminary program, contact: Quality of Life Conference, Surrey Place Centre, c/o Continuing Education, Faculty of Medicine, University of Toronto, 150 College Street Room 121, Toronto M5S 1A8. Phone: 416-978-2719; fax 416-971-2200; e-mail address: a.lind@utoronto.ca

People and Places

Jocelyne Samson-Gauthier has left the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Unit to take a position in the Workplace Accommodation and Safety Services Unit, Human Resources Branch, where she is project coordinator, supporting work in both the accommodations area and emergency measures.

Ted Moses is acting as coordinator in the FIPP Unit. Ted comes most recently from the Community Services Unit, where he has been a senior policy analyst for a number of years.

The Child Care Branch moved out of its location on the 30th

floor of 2 Bloor St. W. The new location is 80 Grosvenor St. 4th floor, Hepburn Block, Toronto M7A 1E9. The fax number has changed to 416-327-0570; all individual phone lines for child care contacts and e-mail addresses remain the same.

The Automating Social Assistance Project (ASAPProject) has consolidated and is now located on the 6th floor of 880 Bay St. About 100 people are working at this site and many telephone numbers have changed. The reception telephone number is 416-327-0000; the fax is 326-8098.

And the winners are...

Members of Communications and Marketing Branch took home three awards from the Communicators' FORUM Awards Oct. 19. Communicators' FORUM is a voluntary professional-development organization for communicators in the Ontario government.

Dialogue editor **Julia Naczynski** received a Silver Award in the category for internal publications of three consecutive issues, unit cost 50 or less.

Jack Stiff and Jane Greer received an honourable mention in the news release category for the Mushkegowuk Harvester Project. This news release was also translated and released in Oji-Cree.

Peter Taylor received an honourable mention in the feature story category for "Finding the right child care for you," which was syndicated to newspapers across Ontario in the summer.



Workshops in London

CPRI
Professional Education '95/96

A part of its professional education calendar of workshops, VOCPRI — the Volunteer Organization of Child and Parent Resource Institute — presents its next one-day workshop on Nov. 24.

Collaborative Consultation in Post Modern Times: An Introduction to the Concepts, Principles and Methods is suitable for supervisors, consultants, trainers and managers. It addresses the issues of consulting with organizations during topsy-turvy times. The processes of negotiation, accountability and others will be addressed, as well as how to remain focused on operating principles.

appropriate methods and personal/professional ethics.

Registration before Nov. 14 is \$30, after Nov. 14 it's \$40. For information, call CPRI at 519-471-2540, ext. 2074.

The Jan. 26 workshop, **Family Empowerment**, is already full. However, future available workshops are: Feb. 23, **Often Invisible: Issues Working with Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Youth**; Mar. 28, 1996, **Channelling Anger and Aggression — Cognitive and Behavioural Strategies**; Apr. 19, 1996, **Sexual Victimization of People with Developmental Disabilities**.

dialogue

Ontario Community and Social Services

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